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Hoping this communication may not seem to you out of place, I am,
with great respect,

J. W. HOLCOMBE.

Department of the Interior,
Office of the Solicitor,
Washington, D. C.

THEOLOGICAL BROKERAGE

SIR,—In your October issue, you publish an article on "The Morality of Force." That essay seems to have been written on the assumption that the humanitarian theory of Government is not as effective as Nietzsche's principle of the Will-to-Power. If it is true in war, that the moral is to the physical as three to one, then the Will-to-Power theory seems to be fallacious. If we translate Nietzsche's theories into terminologies with which we are more familiar, we can, it seems to me, better grasp the premise of German reasoning. If, for instance, we substitute for the supremacy of Culture, our apothegm that "Those who think should govern those who toil," or our other statement, "Whatever is best administered is best," we see that the implied object is the same in either case—the greatest good. Of course the question comes, What is the greatest good, and to whom? Nietzsche says that sympathy is contemptible virtue, and that the greatest number is the whole world. A plausible argument can be made for the Divine Right theory, as well as for our *Vox populi vox Dei* claim. But old *Vox Populi* can, by the consent of the governed, correct his mistakes, but the advocates of the Divine Right cannot show their credentials. All State religions make the same claim of theological brokerage for clerical service.

THOMAS M. ANDERSON.

PORTLAND, OREGON.

SIR,—In your November issue, in reviewing "The Religion of Experience" by Horace J. Bridges, your reviewer says:

"It is a point too often lost sight of that if we do not believe what Jesus taught, we have no business to call ourselves Christians, no matter how religious we may be."

Does he really mean that? If that is true, none of us have any business to call ourselves Christians, for of course none of us believe the chief things Jesus taught.

One of them discredited itself automatically with the death of his last contemporary some eighteen centuries ago. According to Jesus' most solemn assurance, the Kingdom of God, the visible, substantial, supernatural kingdom, as preached by John and expected by the Jews, was to come in the lifetime of the generation he was addressing in Matthew 24 and Mark 13. And, of course, it didn't come. Most of us have ceased to look for it at all, and not even the most fervent millenarian will ever be able to roll back the ages and give us the Kingdom within the time that Jesus taught it was to come.

Another chief teaching of Jesus was the sacredness of the Jewish ritual. However much he hated the narrowness or hypocrisy of those who would reduce all righteousness to the keeping of the law, he never withdrew from the position that its keeping was a part of righteousness. Paul dispensed with the law for us wholly on his own responsibility, and however much

we may applaud the innovation we can never flatter ourselves that therein we believe that Jesus taught.

Another of his teachings was that insanity and sickness are caused by devils in the body of the insane and sick. Another that Heaven was literally a place above the sky, Hell literally a place beneath the crust of the earth. Another that the Baptist was Elias re-incarnated. Who of us believes these teachings? Yet most of us still call ourselves Christians. I wonder if your reviewer would explain a little more fully just what he meant by that statement of his.

FRANCES WILLIAMS.

CHICAGO.

[In writing the sentence to which our correspondent refers, the reviewer had no thought of branding as unchristian those who find themselves unable to accept literally every statement made in the New Testament. The reviewer's concern, of course, was primarily with the meaning and importance of Mr. Bridges' book—not with Biblical interpretations or theological controversy. As the context, he hoped, would make plain, he intended to point out that Mr. Bridges' analysis of the Gospel story and teachings, in spite of what might appear to some readers to be an iconoclastic spirit, was really justified from the point of view of intellectual honesty. In expressing the matter thus curtly, the reviewer was influenced by the thought that "free-thinking" has no more right to indulge in intellectual vagueness than has the strictest orthodoxy—in other words that it is incumbent upon every one, before calling himself a Christian, either to accept with conviction the doctrine of some church, or to think out for himself what the teachings of Christ *essentially* mean. Is it not true that there are individuals—not churches—calling themselves Christians whose real doctrine is simply a code of practical morals and good sense no more Christian than Confucian?—THE REVIEWER.]

SIR,—To describe adequately the pleasure and satisfaction derived from reading "Conserving Our Spiritual Resources," in your December issue, would require the rare expressive powers of Margaret Sherwood herself. Her articles in the REVIEW have never lacked beauty and solidity, but none, in my opinion, has been more estimable in its purpose or of more value to its readers than her latest contribution.

In her delightfully firm and clear style she points out and condemns that which is undoubtedly the worst feature of modernism: materialism, and its increasing appeal to the young. In a manner no less convincing she designates the remedy—literature, that agency through which the mind is broadened and the imagination rekindled.

The materialism that grips the philosophy and life of Germany threatens our own also, and it can be repelled only by those writers who, like Margaret Sherwood, have the clearness of vision to perceive the danger, and the courage to wage war against it.

B. M. LORING.

NEW YORK CITY.